

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 01252 131753Z

42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 EB-11 AID-20 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SPM-01

SWF-02 IO-14 DRC-01 NIC-01 AGR-20 /162 W

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R 130941Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7964

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 1252

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR BM AS ID MY NZ

SUBJECT: NE WIN'S PLANNED VISIT TO MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA,
NEW ZEALAND

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. HAVING COMPLETED A SUCCESSFUL BUT NON-SUBSTANTIVE VISIT TO SOUTH ASIA, PRESIDENT NE WIN IS NOW SCHEDULED TO LEAVE RANGOON MAY 24 FOR A VISIT TO MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND, IN THAT ORDER. WE EXPECT THE SUBSTANCE OF THESE MEETINGS TO BE BOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL. END SUMMARY.

2. THIS WILL BE NE WIN'S SECOND VISIT IN A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR TO BOTH MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA, WHILE BOTH PRIMIN WHITLAM AND TUN ABDUL RAZAK HAVE VISITED BURMA IN 1974. NE WIN'S VISIT TO AUSTRALIA IS IN RESPONSE TO A LONG-STANDING INVITATION (HE HAD TO CANCEL OUT IN 1970 BECUASE OF ILLNESS), AND WILL ALSO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE WITH WHITLAM (IF LATTER WINS CURRENT ELECTION) BEGUN DURING WHITLAM VISIT IN FEBRUARY. THE TALKS IN KL, JAKARTA, AND CANBERRA MAY THUS BE FRANKER AND
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PAGE 02 RANGOO 01252 131753Z

MORE SPECIFIC THAN NE WIN'S SOMEHPMES RATHER DISCURSIVE INTERVIEWS

WITH LEADERS WHOM HE KNOWS LESS WELL.

3. BURMA'S DETERIORATING ECONOMIC SITUATION MAY PROVIDE SOME TOPICS FOR CONVERSATION. BURMA SEEMS LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE RICE SHORTAGES LATER THIS YEAR FOR THIRD YEAR IN ROW, AND WE ARE UNCERTAIN WHETHER IT WILL BE ABLE MEET ALL EXPORT COMMITMENTS INCLUDING 115,000 TONS TO INDONESIA. AT SAME TIME BURMA NEEDS CONTINUING ACCESS TO INDONEISAN OIL AT BEST PRICE IT CAN GET.

4. IN MESSAGE SUMMARIZING GLOOMY ECONOMIC PICTURE, AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR RANGOON HAS URGED HIS GOVERNMENT USE VISIT AS OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE TO NE WIN, FROM AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE, THAT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SECTORS SUCH AS MINING CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NEED NOT POSE POLITICAL DANGERS.

5. BY FORTUNATE COINCIDENCE, NE WIN WILL BE ABLE HEAR AT FIRST HAND IN BOTH KL AND JAKARTA ABOUT RECENTLY-COMPLETED ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING. ALTHOUGH BURMESE MEMBERSHIP IN OR FORMAL ASSOCIATION WITH ASEAN IS AS FAR OFF AS EVER, GUB IS INTERESTED IN KEEPING INFORMED ABOUT ASEAN ACTIVITIES MANY OF WHICH (SUCH AS CONCEPT OF SEA ZONE OF PEACE) IT WELCOMES IN PRINCIPLE.

6. WE UNDERSTAND PROBLEM OF RELATIONS WITH PRC, INCLUDING BURMESE EXPERIENCES, WAS CANVASSED BETWEEN NE WIN AND RAZAK DURING LATTER'S RECENT VISIT TO RANGOON. WITH RAZAK LEAVING FOR PEKING IMMEDIATELY AFTER NE WIN'S VISIT, THERE WILL BE OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS THIS SUBJECT. THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW REPORTS OF GUB INTENTIONS TO SEEK TO NEGOTIATE AT LEAST A SCALING-DOWN OF PRC/BCP HOSTILITIES IN NORTHEAST BURMA, BUT WE DOUBT THAT EITHER NE WIN OR RAZAK WOULD SEE THE LATTER AS A SUITABLE INTERMEDIARY FOR SUCH A PURPOSE.

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